1. A therapeutic peptide comprising between seven and ten amino acid residues, inclusive, said peptide being an analog of one of the following naturally occurring peptides terminating at the carboxy-terminus with a Met residue: (a) litorin; (b) the ten amino acid carboxy-terminal region of mammalian gastrin releasing peptide; and (c) the ten amino acid carboxy-terminal region of amphibian bombesin; said therapeutic peptide being of the formula:

$$R_1 \diagdown \quad A^0\text{-}A^1\text{-}A^2\text{-}Trp\text{-}A^4\text{-}A^5\text{-}A^6\text{-}A^7\text{-}W \quad \diagup R_2$$

wherein

A^0 = Gly, Nle, α-aminobutyric acid, or the D-isomer of any of Ala, Val, Gln, Asn, Leu, Ile, Met, p-X-Phe (where X = F, Cl, Br, NO_2, OH, H or CH_3), Trp, Cys, or ß-Nal, or is deleted;

A^1 = the D or L-isomer of any of pGlu, Nle, or α-aminobutyric acid, or the D-isomer of any of Ala, Val, Gln, Asn, Leu, Ile, Met, p-X-Phe (where X = F, Cl, Br, NO_2, OH, H or CH_3), F_5-Phe, Trp, Cys, or ß-Nal, or is deleted;

A^2 = pGlu, Gly, Ala, Val, Gln, Asn, Leu, Ile, Met, p-X-Phe (where X = F, Cl, Br, NO_2, OH, H or CH_3), Trp, Cys, ß-Nal, His, 1-methyl-His, or 3-methyl-His;

A^4 = Ala, Val, Gln, Asn, Gly, Leu, Ile, Nle, α-aminobutyric acid, Met, p-X-Phe (where X = F, Cl, Br, NO_2, OH, H or CH_3), Trp, Cys, or ß-Nal;

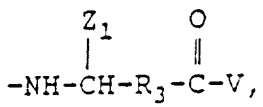
A^5 = Gln, Asn, Gly, Ala, Leu, Ile, Nle, α-aminobutyric acid, Met, Val, p-X-Phe (where X = F, Cl, Br, OH, H or CH_3), Trp, Thr, or ß-Nal;

A^6 = Sar, Gly, or the D-isomer of any of Ala, N-methyl-Ala, Val, Gln, Asn, Leu, Ile, Met, p-X-Phe (where X = F, Cl, Br, NO_2, OH, H or CH_3), Trp, Cys, or ß-Nal;

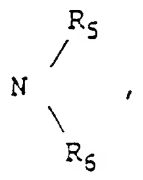
A^7 = 1-methyl-His, 3-methyl-His, or His;

provided that, if A^0 is present, A^1 cannot be pGlu; further provided that, if A^0 or A^1 is present, A^2 cannot be pGlu; further provided that, when A^0 is deleted and A^1 is pGlu, R_1 must be H and R_2 must be the portion of Glu that forms the imine ring in pGlu; and further provided that, W can be any one of the following:

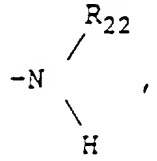
(I):



wherein R_3 is $CHR_{20}-(CH_2)_{n1}$ (where R_{20} is either of H or OH; and n1 is either of 1 or 0), or is deleted, and Z_1 is the identifying group of any of the amino acids Gly, Ala, Val, Leu, Ile, Ser, Asp, Asn, Glu, Gln, p-X-Phe (where X = H, F, Cl, Br, NO_2, OH, or CH_3), F_5-Phe, Trp, Cys, Met, Pro, HyPro, cyclohexyl-Ala, or ß-nal; and V is either OR_4, or

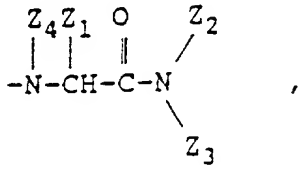


where R_4 is any of C_{1-20} alkyl, C_{3-20} alkenyl, C_{3-20} alkinyl, phenyl, naphthyl, or C_{7-10} phenylalkyl, and each R_5, and R_6, independently, is any of H, C_{1-12} alkyl, C_{7-10} phenylalkyl, lower acyl, or,



where R_{22} is any of H, C_{1-12} alkyl, C_{7-10} phenylalkyl, or lower acyl; provided that, when one of R_5 or R_6 is $-NHR_{22}$, the other is H;

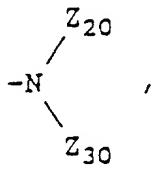
(II):



wherein Z_1 is the identifying group of any one of the amino acids Gly, Ala, Val, Leu, Ile, Ser, Asp, Asn, Glu, ß-Nal, Gln, p-X-Phe

(where X = H, F, Cl, Br, NO_2, OH or CH_3), F_5-Phe, Trp, Cys, Met, Pro, or HyPro; and each Z_2, Z_3, and Z_4, independently, is H, lower alkyl, lower phenylalkyl, or lower naphthylalkyl; or

(III):



wherein each Z_{20} and Z_{30}, independently, is H, lower alkyl, lower phenylalkyl, lower naphthylalkyl; further provided that, when either of Z_{20} or Z_{30} is other than H, A^7 is His, A^6 is Gly, A^5 is Val, A^4 is Ala, A^2 is His, and either of R_1 or R_2 is other than H, A^1 must be other than deleted; further provided that, for the formulas (I) through (III), any asymmetric carbon atom can be R, S or a racemic mixture; and further provided that each R_1 and R_2, independently, is H, C_{1-12} alkyl, C_{7-10} phenylalkyl, COE_1 (where E_1 is C_{1-20} alkyl, C_{3-20} alkenyl, C_{3-20} alkinyl, phenyl, naphthyl, or C_{7-10} phenylalkyl), or lower acyl, and R_1 and R_2 are bonded to the N-terminal amino acid of said peptide, and further provided that when one of R_1 or R_2 is COE_1, the other must be H, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

2. The therapeutic peptide of claim 1 wherein

A^0 = Gly, D-Phe, or is deleted;

A^1 = p-Glu, D-Phe, D-Ala, D-ß-Nal, D-Cpa, or D-Asn;

A^2 = Gln, His, 1-methyl-His, or 3-methyl-His;

A^4 = Ala;

A^5 = Val;

A^6 = Sar, Gly, D-Phe, or D-Ala;

A^7 = His;

and, where W is (I) and R_3 is CH_2 or CH_2-CH_2, Z_1 is the identifying group of Leu or Phe, where W is (I) and R_3 is CHOH-CH_2, Z_1 is the identifying group of Leu, cyclohexyl-Ala, or Phe and each R_5 and R_6 is H; and where W is (I), V is NHR_6, and R_6 is NH_2; where W is (II), Z_1 is the identifying group of any one of the amino acids Leu or p-X-Phe (where X = H, F, Cl, Br, NO_2, OH or CH_3); and each Z_2, Z_3 and Z_4, independently, is H, lower alkyl, lower phenylalkyl, or lower naphthylalkyl; and where W is (III), each Z_{20} and Z_{30}, is H; and each R_1 and R_2, independently, is H, lower alkyl, or lower acyl.

3. The therapeutic peptide of claim 2 of the formula: D-Phe-Gln-Trp-Ala-Val-Gly-His-Leu-ethylamide.

4. The therapeutic peptide of claim 2 of the formula: p-Glu-Gln-Trp-Ala-Val-Gly-His-statine-amide.

5. The therapeutic peptide of claim 2 of the formula:

D-Cpa-Gln-Trp-Ala-Val-Gly-His-ß-Leu-NH_2.

6. The peptide of claim 1 wherein W is (I), V is OR_4, and R_4 is any of C_{1-20} alkyl, C_{3-20} alkenyl, C_{3-20} alkinyl, phenyl, naphthyl, or C_{7-10} phenylalkyl, and A^6 is N-methyl-D-Ala or $A^{1,}$ is D-F_5-Phe.

7. The therapeutic peptide of claim 6 of the formula:

D-Phe-Gln-Trp-Ala-Val-N-methyl-D-Ala-His-Leu-methylester.

8. The therapeutic peptide of claim 2 of the formula:

D-Cpa-Gln-Trp-Ala-Val-D-Ala-His-ß-Leu-NH_2.